

February 2019

Comp Plan Standards Manual Revised



For years, one of the most common questions the Division of Statewide Planning heard from communities was, “Exactly what do I need in my comprehensive plan in order for it to be approved by the State?” In response to these requests, the Division produced the *Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning Standards Manual* as guidance to

municipalities as to what is required for a plan to obtain State approval. This past June, the State Planning Council approved staff-recommended amendments to the *Manual*, for two primary reasons: to ensure its consistency with State law and to reword several standards to improve their clarity.

For anyone working on a comprehensive plan, please be aware that there is now a distinction made between Standards that *must* be satisfied to meet the requirements of the Comprehensive Planning Act and those standards that, while valuable, are not required for State approval of a comprehensive plan. As noted in the revised *Manual*, “A standard may: 1) reiterate a requirement found in the Act; 2) provide specifics to clarify a requirement of the Act; 3) describe processes that if followed will help ensure State approval; or 4) identify information that while not specifically required by the Act, has been identified as vital to supporting the intents of the Act.” The revised *Manual* clearly notes which standards are recommended but not required for State approval.

The *Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning Standards Manual Revised June 14, 2018* can be viewed on the RI [Statewide Planning website](#). For more information, please contact Kevin Nelson, Supervising Planner, at Kevin.Nelson@doa.ri.gov or 401-222-2093.

Major TIP Amendment

The State Planning Council’s Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) is accepting comments on a proposed Major Amendment (classified as Amendment #11) to the FFY 2018-2027 *State Transportation Improvement Program* (STIP) for the State of Rhode Island.

The Major Amendment has been requested by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) and the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA). RIDOT’s Amendment request proposes to significantly redistribute funding to projects to cover increased construction costs, funding reductions, and align the



and align the

program with Bridge and Pavement asset management priorities. The proposed changes affect several STIP program areas, including: Bridge, Traffic Safety, Transit and Pavement Capital; Bridge, Drainage, Traffic and Pavement Maintenance, Headquarters, Maintenance and Transit Operations; Planning – Program Development; and Transportation Alternatives. RIPTA has requested changes to support new projects, including the Quonset Bulkhead Installation, and account for grants awarded to continue its pilot Electric Bus program, modernize the Chafee Maintenance Facility, and upgrade the East Side bus tunnel.

The TAC will be conducting public hearings on February 25 and February 28 to accept comments on the proposed amendment: see "Events," below, for more information. The proposed amendment is available for review at www.planning.ri.gov or at the RI Division of Statewide Planning's office at 1 Capitol Hill, Providence, between 8:30AM and 4PM, Monday through Friday. A copy may also be obtained by calling (401) 222-2177. Comments on the amendment may be sent to Michael.Dalessandro@doa.ri.gov.

From the Associate Director

Here we are again. It has been a couple of months since I last had an opportunity to address those who read this newsletter. We've had three official state holidays, two polar vortex blasts, two employee resignations, one Superbowl win, and an entire government shutdown between then and now. I've sat at Energy Facility Siting Board for 9.5 days, presented at the Transportation Research Board conference in Washington DC, participated in seventeen conference calls, and worked to help stand up the state's Complete Count Committee for the 2020 Census, among other tasks, duties, and responsibilities.

I've also passed my six month mark as Associate Director for the Division of Statewide Planning. Guess what? I'm not planning on running away from home any time soon. We've got a host of challenges ahead of us in the coming year, but I'm also surrounded by some of the most talented, brilliant, and dedicated planners I've ever met, both on my Division of Planning team and at large, throughout Rhode Island's communities.

I mention challenges: we're going to be talking about Solar Facility siting at our March 1 Planners' Round-table (see Events for details), but there's so much more on our plates. I don't know about you, but for every one thing I take off my to-do list, I add two more. Pretty soon my list is going to look like a CVS receipt. Preparing for Census 2020; ensuring that proposed TIP amendments receive analysis and public review and comment; completion and adoption of the new Long Range Transportation Plan with all of its components (bike, transit, and a holistic view); development of a work program for the next Federal fiscal year; the beginning of the process to update *Land Use 2025* (to *Land Use 2050*); work with transportation and climate through Georgetown Climate Center (TCI) and the Infrastructure and Climate Network (ICNet).

There's a lot to accomplish, and February is a short month. Before we know it, I'll be back again, in the March edition. My to-do list seems to constantly grow, with 5 new e-mails with requests for something in the space of the time it took me to write this column. Yet, it's important to remember, when feeling overwhelmed:

"I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do."

– *Edward Everett Hale*

Two Local Plans Approved

The State Planning Council recently awarded the Towns of Tiverton and Burrillville a Certificate of Recognition to congratulate them on State approval of their

Comprehensive Plans.

Tiverton Planning Board Vice-Chair Susan Gill said that the process of updating their Plan was "challenging," as it was completed by a dedicated group of volunteers during a period when the Town had no planner. She is extremely proud of the Plan and is happy to have Town Planner Bill Compton on board.

One of the Division of Planning's peer reviewers called the Burrillville Comp Plan "...hands down, one of the most rewarding comprehensive plans to read!" The Town is clearly committed to maintaining its rural character.

Browse the [Tiverton Comprehensive Plan](#) and the [Burrillville Comprehensive Plan](#) on our website, www.planning.ri.gov.



Above, l to r: DOA Director Michael DiBiase; Tiverton Town Planner William Compton, AICP; Tiverton Planning Board Vice-Chair Susan Gill; Supervising Planner Kevin Nelson; and Associate Director Meredith Brady.



Above, l to r: Michael DiBiase, Burrillville Town Planner Raymond Goff, Burrillville Deputy Planner Christine Langlois, Kevin Nelson and Meredith Brady.

Upcoming Meetings

[State Planning Council](#)

February 14 at 9AM

DOA Conference Room 2A
One Capitol Hill, Providence

[Transportation Advisory Committee](#)

February 28 at 4PM

DOA Conference Room 2A
One Capitol Hill, Providence

[Technical Committee](#)

March 1 at 9AM

DOA Conference Room 2A
One Capitol Hill, Providence

[RIGIS Executive Committee](#)

March 21 at 2PM

USDA-NRS Building
60 Quaker Lane, Warwick

All meetings are open to the public!

PHOTO TRIVIA:

Do you know where in RI this building is located?
See the answer at the bottom of the newsletter.



Upcoming Events

February 12 "[Overcoming the Obstacles that Face Economically-Challenged Downtown Mixed-Use Projects](#)" Speaker: Bob Stevens, Principal- M&S Development, Brattleboro. Time: 12PM-1PM. For more information and to RSVP, contact Roberta.Groch@doa.ri.gov (1.0 CM). Sponsored by the RI Division of Statewide Planning.

- Location: DOA Conference Room 2B, 1 Capitol Hill, Providence.

February 15 SNEAPA 2019 Conference planning meeting. The Conference Committee welcomes members to help plan this annual event! Expect to spend two hours per month on a conference call, plus volunteering for a few shifts at the Conference. Subcommittees may require a few additional hours per month. SNEAPA 2019 will be held October 17-18 in Springfield. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Krista Moravec, AICP at kmoravec@horsleywitten.com.

February 25 Public hearing on the [proposed Major Amendment #11 to the State Transportation Improvement Program \(STIP\)](#). Time: 5:30P.

- Location: Narragansett Town Hall– Council Chambers, 25 Fifth Ave., Narragansett.

February 28 Public hearing on the [proposed Major Amendment #11 to the State Transportation Improvement Program \(STIP\)](#). Time: 4:00P.

- Location: DOA Conference Room 2A. 1 Capitol Hill, Providence.

February 28 "Planning for Preservation." The RI Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC) is hosting a public meeting to seek input as they prepare to update the State Historic Preservation Plan. A series of public meetings in 2019 invite conversation about program areas and how your feedback can inform their work. Time: 2PM. Contact [Elizabeth Warburton](#) to RSVP or for more information.

- Location: American-French Genealogical Society, 78 Earle Street, Woonsocket.

URI Landscape Architecture Lectures. Location: The Beupre Center for Chemical & Forensic Sciences, Room 105A, 140 Flagg Road, Kingston, RI.

- **February 28** Kaila Bachman '10, Principal- CBA, Boston, and Kristin Kaczmarek-Andel '05- QDA, RI. Lecture Title: "Stories From the Sandbox: Communication, Collaboration, and Management in Work and Play." Time: 7PM.
- **March 21** Gina Ford, Principal- Agency Landscape + Planning, Boston. Lecture Title: At the Water's Edge: Case Studies in Riverfront and Coastal Restoration. Time: 7PM.

March 1 RI Planners' Round-table Discussion 2:30-4PM. All Rhode Island municipal planners are welcome to attend a presentation regarding the new State guidance for the siting of solar facilities by the RI Office of Energy Resources and the RI Division of Statewide Planning. Discussion and networking to follow. Please RSVP to Roberta.Groch@doa.ri.gov.

- Location: Cranston Public Library, 140 Sockanosset Cross Road.

March 9 Rhode Island Land and Water Summit Who should attend the Summit? Board members, volunteers and staff from watershed councils, land trusts and conservation commissions, and anyone interested in land and watershed conservation. [Registration](#) is \$55 until February 23 and \$80 thereafter. Time: 8A-4P.

- Location: URI Memorial Union, 50 Lower College Road, Kingston.

March 15 Aquidneck Island Smart Housing Forum Aquidneck Island Planning Council is hosting a forum to discuss the challenges and opportunities in housing at this interactive and engaging dialogue as they plan for a smart housing future for Aquidneck Island. Event is free, but [pre-registration](#) is required.

- Location: Community College of Rhode Island, 1 John H. Chafee Blvd., Newport.

Grant Opportunities

February 14 Deadline for [Art Works](#), the National Endowment for the Arts' principal grants program, to support public engagement with, and access to, various forms of excellent art across the nation and the integration of the arts into the fabric of community life. Matching grants generally will range from \$10,000 to \$100,000.

February 15 Deadline for the [EPA Environmental Justice Small Grants](#)(EJSG) program to support community-driven projects designed to engage, educate, and empower communities to better understand local environmental and public health issues and develop strategies for addressing those issues, building consensus in the community, and setting community priorities. The schedule for informational pre-application calls can be found [here](#).

February 22 Deadline for the [North American Wetlands Conservation Act \(Act\) Grants Program](#), a competitive, matching grants program that supports public-private partnerships carrying out projects that further the goals of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. Projects must involve long-term protection, restoration, and/or enhancement of wetlands. Grants awards are for \$100,000 or less with a 1:1 match.

March 14 Deadline for [RI Foundation Community Grants](#) Neighborhood-based grants that will produce places to gather, create friendships and inspire new collaborations that will build community connections all over Rhode Island. Maximum grant: \$10,000.

March 30 Deadline for the [Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program](#) to support the rehabilitation of historic properties listed in, or eligible for, listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Projects must be in communities defined as "rural" by the US Bureau of the Census. Applicants must make sub-grants for physical preservation projects within the jurisdiction of the applicant. Opportunity #P19AS00015 on [Grants.gov](#)

Planning Articles of Interest

[Mass. governor signs law regulating short-term rentals](#)

[Rising waters are drowning Amtrak's Northeast corridor](#)

[Planners concerned new rules could McMansion RI's coast](#)

[US population growth hits 80-year low, capping off a year of demographic stagnation](#)

[The three housing stories to watch in 2019](#)

[AAA's big plans for Apponaug's saw-tooth building](#)

[Will dollar stores be the end of local American retail?](#)

Check out our website for plans, maps, publications, and
more!

www.planning.ri.gov

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PHOTO TRIVIA ANSWER:

Schoolhouse #1 (1800)

Tiverton Four Corners

Photo: Discover Newport website